

why, as Senator BLUNT said, this should be an easy solution.

I will tell you, by the way, these are not just Dreamers in Nevada whom I talk about all the time—and I am proud to. I got letters from Dreamers in Kentucky. I got letters from Dreamers in Texas. They are all over this country, and they are similar. They are similar to the ones that I just talked about.

So, yes, I think Dreamers deserve a pathway to citizenship, but not sometime in the future, not in some future Congress, but now. People on both sides of the aisle know this. That is why we have been close to compromise so frequently and so frustratingly. But I know it is possible to come together on a compromise that supports Dreamers and, yes, increases border security. We can do both. They are not mutually exclusive. We can work to secure our borders and still work to pass legislation to put Dreamers on a pathway. We can do both. It is common sense.

We need these reforms. We need to focus on moving forward and not just pointing fingers at the problem.

We just heard Senator LEAHY earlier today give his farewell speech. In it he talked about the importance of us not only working together to come to compromise, but he talked about that we have to stop finger-pointing. We have got to stop finger-pointing to the problem for political advantage and start pointing the way to a solution. That is what this needs now. This is the moment for all of us to come together to really find a solution here at the end of the day, to get in a room and have commonsense legislation that moves this issue forward, because the truth is that there is no need for us to face one crisis after another on our southern border.

Congress's role—and, believe me, this is Congress's role—is to solve this problem by working together, but partisan finger-pointing and blame games keep it from getting it done.

I know. I just came off of an election cycle. I know. I can tell you that my opponent, instead of coming up with a solution, all he wanted to do was point to the border. But, I will tell you, I wasn't sent to Congress—I wasn't sent here—to just point blame, identify the problem, and do nothing about it. We are sent here to solve problems.

These aren't easy issues. That is why it requires us to work together.

I have to thank the Presiding Officer because of your willingness to reach across the aisle, and you recognize the importance of working together to solve problems. That is why I have hope that we can still get this done.

Hearing from some of my colleagues today, I agree with them. There is a problem at the border. We have got to fix it. I know it. I was attorney general for 8 years in my State. Do you know one of the issues I worked on even though I wasn't in a border state? The border and the southern border, because we had drug trafficking issues.

We had human trafficking issues, money laundering, and weapons trafficking that bled into my State because of what was happening at the border.

So my focus has always been: Yes, putting those resources at the border to address those issues, including the fentanyl that is coming across the border now. And we can do that and still address an issue for so many Dreamers who are already here, living in our communities, who want to be an essential part of our workforce.

Why is that important? Because right now we have seen such an incredible change in America and across the world since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. During that time, workers retired, immigration slowed, and labor markets tightened as a result. This country needs workers in industries from the tech sector to agriculture, to home healthcare and childcare, and we need them badly.

And here is what I know, and we all know this: that, according to the Department of Labor, the United States has a labor shortfall of roughly 3.5 million people.

This is our workforce. If we were to pass this pathway for citizenship for so many, this is a part of our essential workforce. They are already here.

We are feeling this workforce shortfall in Nevada, and I hear it across the country from my colleagues when we talk. Every week I hear from business owners in Nevada who tell me about their struggle to find employees. Comprehensive immigration reforms would let us welcome workers in a way that benefits our society and our economy and treats those who want to come to America with dignity.

Yet we are not enacting them. The last time Congress passed comprehensive immigration reform was when Ronald Reagan was President.

Madam President, Nevada sent me back to the Senate because they believe. They believe not only that I can reach across the aisle to make change but that I will do it. They have seen me do it before. They know I will work with anyone who is willing to come to the table. But we need serious action, and I hope my colleagues, whether they are in my party or nonpartisan or they are Republicans, are willing to come to the table to find a solution.

We need that willingness to work together and to act on issues like Dreamers, like border security. I know my colleague from Texas who is here is going to talk about that. I agree with him. But we can do both. We can do both and do right by so many and move this country forward.

As long as I am in the Senate, I am going to be a voice for Dreamers because they are a part of the fabric of this country. I will work with anyone to fix our broken immigration system and ensure we keep our borders secure.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

CHILDREN'S MEDICINE

Mr. TUBERVILLE. Madam President, I rise today to call attention to a very serious issue and potential crisis that seems to be unfolding right under our eyes and under the radar. Right now, many, many communities across our country are facing a huge shortage of children's painkillers, like Children's Tylenol, and antibiotics, like amoxicillin.

We are in the middle of flu season and in an unusually bad year for RSV, a virus that can be especially tough on young children. As parents head to pharmacies to get medicines to help their sick kids and to make them feel better, they are seeing very empty shelves across our country.

My staff is hearing from folks daily about the problems that they are seeing trying to find these medicines, both over-the-counter and prescription.

David, a pharmacist from Andalusia, AL, told that "currently [they] cannot order multiple antibiotics commonly used for pediatric patients, including amoxicillin." He is also unable to order pain medicine like Tylenol and Advil. It is not available.

You can't even order it, much less get it. David was told by his wholesaler that the supply of medication simply does not exist, as we speak—and this is in the middle of a very serious flu and cold season all throughout our country.

Another pharmacist, Dennis from Opelika, AL, faces the same problem and described the potentially dire nature of the shortage. He told me: "This can rapidly"—and is rapidly—"turning into a serious situation among the most vulnerable population," which is "our children."

Worse is what some desperate but well-meaning parents are turning to in order to provide their children some help. Moms and dads who can't find kids' medicines are choosing to give their children smaller doses of adult medicine instead. Doctors are warning constantly against this in the strongest possible terms—a warning we should be sharing far and wide: Children's medicine is specifically designed for the developing of young bodies.

But parents with sick children don't have time to drive from town to town to search for these medicines. This crisis is developing across the country, and we should not wait for it to get worse before doing something about it. We cannot allow this situation to turn into the baby formula crisis.

While this medication shortage will, no doubt, require a short-term solution, I want to take a minute to highlight an important long-term solution to these supply chain problems.

We need to produce pharmaceuticals in the United States. Very little of that happens today. The United States has every capability to be able to produce essential goods right here at home. The pandemic showed us the very serious consequences of depending on imports for things that we need to

survive, especially from adversaries like China. Congress and the rest of the Federal Government should do what we can do to boost domestic production in medicine and medical supplies. It has to be done. We can't wait.

Along with essential goods like fuel and critical minerals, pharmaceuticals are vital to national security. We cannot allow our adversaries to hold their supplies over our heads as a bargaining tool, and that is exactly what they are doing as we speak.

I hope my time on the floor today has opened some eyes to the children's medical shortage. The dangers of foreign independence are getting worse every day.

To every parent in Alabama and across our country, we are listening, and we want you to listen to the advice of your doctors. Always check with medical professionals before giving your children any medicine, and hopefully, in the near future, this body can help solve this problem and move our suppliers from international to domestic.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

AMENDING TITLE VI OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT TO ALLOW STATES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS TO USE CORONAVIRUS RELIEF FUNDS PROVIDED UNDER THE AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT FOR INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS, IMPROVE THE LOCAL ASSISTANCE AND TRIBAL CONSISTENCY FUND, PROVIDE TRIBAL GOVERNMENTS WITH MORE TIME TO USE CORONAVIRUS RELIEF FUND PAYMENTS

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, over the last few years, pandemic relief bills have sent billions of dollars to State and local governments to support their pandemic responses and recoveries, and it is appropriate that we did so. But the truth is, when the pandemic hit, we didn't know how long it would last or what the ripple effects of that would be, both the public health and economic impacts on State and local governments and the constituencies that they serve.

I have heard from countless Texas leaders that they have more money than eligible expenses under the guardrails Congress applied at the time, and my colleagues can attest to the fact that this is not a unique problem to Texas. States, counties, and cities across the country want more flexibility to spend these relief dollars on their highest priority projects, especially infrastructure. If we don't do this, these jurisdictions are going to fritter these dollars away on things that will not have a lasting, positive impact on our economy or public safety. An investment in infrastructure will be an investment in public safety and a growing economy.

My friend Senator PADILLA from California and I have worked with the administration and our colleagues on both sides of the aisle in order to come up with a bill that would grant this flexibility. This bill originally passed the Senate unanimously last October. You know, people sometimes think that we can't get along, that we can't get anything done, but when big things happen, sometimes they happen without people even recognizing it. That demonstrates not only the bipartisan nature of this legislation but the fact that it just makes good sense.

Unfortunately, the House never passed our bill. We have now worked in good faith to build the kind of support necessary among House Members and House leadership in order to get that done, and I hope the Senate will advance this new version today.

Simply put, this legislation will unlock billions of dollars in unspent COVID funds for infrastructure projects as well as disaster relief. It restores decision making power to the local level, and—this is unique to spending bills in Washington, DC—this will not result in a single dollar of additional appropriations or a single dollar added to the deficit. This money is already in the hands of the States, the counties, and the cities; they just need more flexibility to spend it in a way that makes sense to them.

If I could just add as a quick footnote before deferring to my colleagues, a lot of times when we have disasters or we want to do something big for the country, we pass legislation, but it takes years to implement. Part of the problem is getting the money from Washington, DC, down to those local jurisdictions, among other things. Well, this will expedite these infrastructure projects and disaster relief because they already have it in hand.

I just want to say publicly how much I appreciate Senator PADILLA and his staff, Senator MURKOWSKI and her staff, and Senator TESTER and his staff for working with us on this legislation.

Again, this makes so much sense that it passed unanimously previously, and now we have worked out the differences with the House. With any luck, we will get this to the President without further delay. We have benefited from feedback from countless Members on both sides of the aisle, and I hope we can finally grant our State and local leaders the flexibility that they have requested to spend these dollars in a way that makes the most sense according to their priorities.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Mr. PADILLA. Madam President, I rise today, alongside my colleague, the senior Senator from Texas, to speak in support of our bipartisan effort to continue to give States, local, Tribal, and territorial governments the support they need as they continue to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic.

While no corner of the United States was untouched by COVID, we also

know that every town and, frankly, every Tribe, every city, every State, and every local community was impacted in a different way. As a result, they have different, specific needs for that recovery.

Over the last 2 years, Congress has provided critical lifelines to communities across the country that are trying to get through the pandemic and begin to rebuild, but today, almost 3 years since the start of the pandemic in the United States, there is still more we can and should do to help tailor the Federal resources that we have previously approved to better fit each local community and give them the tools they need to address their most pressing local needs.

At its core, this bill is about flexibility and empowering local governments that are closest to the people—flexibility for State and local governments to use their fiscal recovery dollars as strategically, as effectively, and as efficiently as possible; flexibility for the Treasury Department to continue to implement critical assistance for communities that need it; flexibility for counties and Tribes that host our Nation's public lands.

As Senator CORNYN mentioned, this bill is the result of a long bipartisan effort that has involved many of our colleagues on both sides of the aisle, on both sides of the Capitol.

I particularly want to thank Senator CORNYN and his excellent staff for their hard work as well. I thank Senator TESTER, Senator MURKOWSKI, and others involved in getting us to this point. I urge my colleagues to join us in supporting this measure.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana.

Mr. TESTER. Madam President, I want to start by echoing Senator PADILLA in thanking Senator CORNYN from Texas, Senator PADILLA from California, and Senator MURKOWSKI from Alaska for working on this important issue.

This is a place where oftentimes common sense tends to take a leave of absence. This is a great example of a commonsense bill wherein folks have come together on both sides of the aisle to address challenges that are facing our local governments.

Earlier this month, Senator MURKOWSKI and I introduced our Local Assistance Fairness Act. This bill fixes an error in the American Rescue Plan's Local Assistance and Tribal Consistency Fund that has prevented consolidated local governments from accessing this critical funding. Back in Montana, this has impacted two of our counties and municipalities—Butte-Silver Bow and Anaconda-Deer Lodge. Both of these counties can use this help. This legislation will help them continue to keep folks safe, improve infrastructure, and lay the groundwork for bringing good-paying jobs to the region.

I appreciate my friends from Texas and California and Senator MURKOWSKI